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FE WEEK

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FE Week

FE 'SAVIOUR' OUSTED AT POLLS



PA

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NEW GRADE THREE RESULTS ON RISE "UP 16%"

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FE & SKILLS SURVEY SECRETS REVEALED



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BEST LIBRARIANS

You're looking at the Midland college librarians who offer the best customer service in the country — it's official.

The Buxton & Leek College team, which includes 11 other staff, picked up a national award from the Council for Learning Resources in Colleges in recognition of their work in facilitating learning for its students.

They lifted the trophy for the customer service category of the contest, decided by an independent judge.

Buxton & Leek library services manager Maria Carnegie said: "Over the years, we have really listened to what students tell us and used that feedback to create an interactive approach to library services which really works."

STRUGGLING COLLEGES 'IN DISCUSSIONS' AMID AREA REVIEW CALL

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A merger between two failing and nearby South East London colleges could be on the table with the FE Commissioner considering both their futures, *FE Week* can reveal.

Dr David Collins has been sent into Greenwich Community College and Lewisham Southwark College in recent months after they both got disastrous grade four Ofsted results — the second in a row for Lewisham Southwark.

And while his recommendation of a structure and prospects assessment at Greenwich was made public in March, a Department for Business, Innovation and Skills spokesperson told *FE Week* he had recommended the same at Lewisham Southwark and that it was now under way.

The report of Dr Collins' second Lewisham Southwark inspection has not been published, but the BIS spokesperson further revealed the two colleges, which have around 13,000 learners, had already entered into "discussions" with each other.

Greenwich principal Lindsey Noble, who took over after the inspection by Dr Collins, who placed the college into administered status amid concerns over provision and finances, said: "One option might be merger with a number of possible colleges, including Lewisham Southwark College, but a range of options will be considered."

A spokesperson at Lewisham Southwark said information about its structure and prospects assessment had "been shared with staff".

The assessments of the grade four colleges come amid calls for a review of FE provision in South East London in the same vein as the review underway in Nottingham, as revealed on feweek.co.uk this month [see page two for more]. And the principals of two other South East London colleges also raised no objection to a review.

Shakira Martin, National Union of Students vice president-elect for FE and Lewisham Southwark students' union president, said: "I would rather the commissioner focused on provision across the area rather than individual colleges. It could put issues faced by my college and Greenwich in better context."

Further Education Trust for Leadership honorary president Dame Ruth Silver, a former Lewisham College principal, also backed an area-wide review. But she said: "I think any mergers would be wrong, as existing problems just get bigger with bigger colleges.

"The issues facing colleges in South East London stretch beyond FE, as our sector is missing out on funding to schools and universities for example. I would ultimately like Dr Collins to look at all education in that area and how it could work better overall."

Danny Ridgeway, principal of grade two Ofsted-rated Bexley College, said: "There are clearly issues with quality in some South East London colleges. We do not object in principle to a review nor to the possibility of federations or mergers."

Mark Silverman, principal of grade three Ofsted-rated Lambeth College, said: "If there was an area-wide review, then we would expect to contribute. We support anything that can contribute to improving FE."

The BIS spokesperson said it would be for the new Government to decide whether to launch an area-wide review of South East London.

Editor's comment page 8

ncfe.

a safe pair of hands.

New Health and Safety qualifications for employment from NCFE.



EDITION 137

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NEWS

COLLEGE HITS BACK OVER EARLY CLOSURE OF SCHOOL

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Stockport College has hit back at questions over its role as sponsor of Stockport Technical School after the announcement it would close a year earlier than planned.

More than 20 learners will have to be found schools elsewhere at which to complete GCSEs and other qualifications after the 14 to 19 free school announced it would close at the end of this academic year.

It was previously reported by *FE Week* that the school, which opened in the Wellington House office block in September 2013, announced in March it would close its doors in 2016, citing disappointing recruitment levels caused by the lack of a permanent building.

But principal Philippa Ollerhead this month confirmed the school would in fact close at the end of 2014/15 instead — forcing 22 Year 10 pupils to transfer to secondary schools in the area to complete their GCSEs and other qualifications, with an option to complete vocational courses at Stockport College on a day release basis.

And although Ms Ollerhead claimed the Education Funding Agency (EFA) had failed to find the school a home for its final year of operation, triggering the decision to close earlier than planned, she said ongoing problems at Stockport College, which was branded inadequate in October 2013, "didn't help".

"Stockport College is our sponsor and they have had a myriad of problems themselves and that hasn't helped, but they have done the best they can," she told *FE Week*.



But Simon Andrews (pictured), Stockport College's third principal since January 2014, said the 7,000-learner institution, which has a current Skills Funding Agency allocation of £7.5m, was making "big strides", having raised its grade to "requires improvement" following an inspection in December.

He said: "Our focus is on the wellbeing and progression of every student. We are working proactively with the Stockport Technical School to ensure all students have been placed in local schools.

"Stockport College has not failed in its duty as a sponsor. Issues outside the scope of the college, such as the failure to secure a permanent home for Stockport Technical School and the politics of local secondary schools have contributed to the situation."

An EFA spokesperson said it had agreed to the school trust's request to close as it was "no longer viable in the long-term", but claimed it had found a permanent location for the school in 2014 with which its ruling trust decided not to proceed.

She added: "We and the trust are working with the local council to ensure alternative school places are found for pupils, ensuring a smooth transition."

Ms Ollerhead said that although the former Hillcrest Grammar School site in Stockport was originally identified as a potential future base for the school, low pupil numbers meant the large building was "not a financially viable option".

UCU hopes for end of competition with review

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The University and College Union (UCU) has said it hopes FE Commissioner Dr David Collins' city-wide review of vocational education under way in Nottingham could end "wasteful and unnecessary" competition between local providers.

The review, revealed exclusively by feweek.co.uk this month, could lead to the merger of two of the city's biggest colleges, New College Nottingham (NCN) and Central College Nottingham.

The Nottingham branch of the UCU said the review was an "opportunity" — and one that "should not be wasted" — but said alternatives to a merger should be explored.

The review follows grade three Ofsted inspection results for both NCN and Central over the last year and the revelation, reported in *FE Week* on April 20, that New College Nottingham (NCN) plans for a multimillion pound campus revamp had to be saved by £12m funding from the local authority and Skills Funding Agency (SFA).

The first of four planned meetings, chaired by Dr Collins and involving governors from both colleges and both principals, is believed to have taken place on Monday, April 27.

A Nottingham UCU spokesperson called on the commissioner to ensure the review "enables meaningful participation in the review process by all stakeholders."

He said: "UCU has long argued that the FE structures in the city need rethinking."

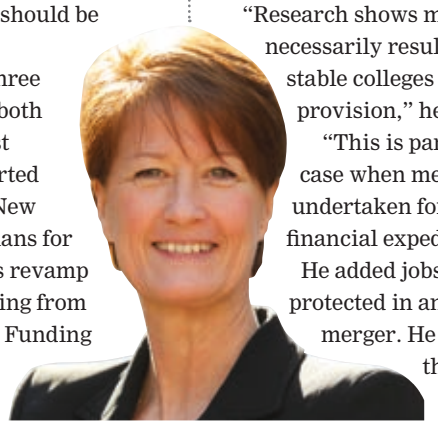
He branded competition between providers in the city "unnecessary and wasteful".

However, he said UCU was "neutral on the issue of merger", but added combining NCN and Central was "only one option" and said "alternative propositions should be explored".

"Research shows mergers do not necessarily result in better run, more stable colleges or better quality provision," he said.

"This is particularly the case when mergers are undertaken for reasons of financial expediency."

He added jobs should be protected in any possible merger. He also called for the review to put in place "a collaborative strategic structure", which he said, "would be in a better position to pool resources and expertise".





"The review is an opportunity for a broad collaborative effort that restores the democratic dimension of FE," he said. "It is an opportunity that should not be wasted."

Dawn Whitemore (pictured left), principal of NCN, and Malcolm Cowgill (picture right), principal of Central, issued a joint statement to their staff on April 28 confirming that Dr Collins had launched the review.

It said that both colleges had agreed to "participate actively" in the review and "share information and data openly".

A spokesperson for NCN also told *FE Week*: "The review has been on the cards for some time and has been championed by Nottingham City Council."

She added: "Both colleges welcome this review and will continue to work in partnership with all key stakeholders throughout the process."

A Nottingham City Council spokesperson confirmed the council was involved with the city-wide review.

FE WEEK NEWS IN BRIEF

Standards judges search

Applications for organisations to judge apprentices at the end of their training on new apprenticeship standards are now open.

Employers must choose an organisation from a Skills Funding Agency register to conduct independent end-point assessments of their apprentices.

Applications for the register are open for programmes including housing management, dental technician, actuarial technician and golf greenkeeper.

Visit https://skillsfundingagency.bravosolution.co.uk for more.

Dame Asha up for award

West Nottinghamshire College principal Dame Asha Khemka has been named as a finalist in this year's First Women Awards.

Dame Asha has been shortlisted in the public service category of the awards, organised by the Confederation of British Industry and trade magazine Real Business.

Dame Asha said the nomination was "humbling" and "testimony" to her college's "hard-working and dedicated staff".

The winner will be announced by TV presenter Clare Balding at the London Marriott Hotel on June 11.

Fracking decision delay

A decision on whether to allow the nearest fracking facilities to the planned National College for Fracking to go ahead has been deferred to next month.

Planners at Lancashire County Council had recommended rejecting an application by energy firm Cuadrilla to extract shale gas from two sites near Blackpool and the Fylde College, the national training hub for the fracking industry.

However, in January Cuadrilla was given until the end of April to address concerns about noise and traffic — and the council has now extended the deadline until June 30.

NEWS

FE ‘saviour’ Cable loses his seat as Tories head for majority

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Jonathan Brady / PA Wire/Press Association Images

The self-proclaimed ‘saviour of FE’ has been ousted in a disastrous General Election for the Liberal Democrats and Labour.

Former Business Secretary Dr Vince Cable (pictured) became one of the most high-profile casualties of the General Election on Thursday (May 7) as he lost his Twickenham seat to the Conservatives.

The Liberal Democrat last October claimed to have fought off suggestions from civil servants in 2010 to cut budgets to a level that would have “killed off FE” — a claim later backed up by former Skills Funding Agency boss David Hughes, chief executive of the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education.

At the time of going to press, the Conservatives were widely being tipped to claim a majority with around 330 MPs.

Dr Cable, who had led the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) for the past five years, was one of dozens of Liberal Democrats to lose their seats in Parliament.

The economist and former Lib Dem deputy leader was first elected to Parliament in 1997 and had increased his majority every year until 2010, when he won by more than 12,000 votes.

Another high-profile Lib Dem loss was education minister David Laws, who lost his seat in Yeovil. Liberal Democrat leader Nick Clegg was the only minister from his party to retain his seat, albeit narrowly.

Conceding defeat to Tania Mathias, who won 25,580 votes to Dr Cable’s 23,563, he said: “Thanks are due to a lot of other people, the people who organised this event, above all to my army of volunteers.”

He said the result was “no reflection” on the work of his team, adding: “The fact is we were hit by a very well-organised national campaign based on people’s fear of a Labour government and the Scottish nationalists.”

The result contrasted with a good night for the Conservatives who saw comfortable wins for Skills Minister Nick Boles and Education Secretary Nicky Morgan, who retained their seats in Grantham and Stamford, and Loughborough, respectively. Education Select Committee chair Graham Stuart was also returned to the House of Commons as an MP, reclaiming his Beverley and Holderness seat.

The FE and skills sector’s Labour contingent will also be back at the Commons. Shadow Business Secretary Chuka Umunna won Streatham and Shadow Education Secretary Tristram Hunt retook Stoke on Trent Central. Shadow Skills Minister Liam Byrne reclaimed the seat in Birmingham Hodge Hill, as did Shadow Junior Education Minister Yvonne Fovargue in Makerfield constituency.

And the party’s BIS Select Committee chair Adrian Bailey won West Bromwich West.

Colleges play ‘integral part’ in General Election

Colleges up and down the country played host to polling booths for the 2015 General Election.

They were among the thousands of venues used as voting stations, open from7am to 10pm on Thursday (May 7).

Among those to share pictures on Twitter of their involvement as the nation went to the polls were West Kent College and Luton Sixth Form College, which tweeted: “We’re not just a college today — we’re a #GE2015 polling station too. Make sure you vote! :-)”.

Meanwhile in Walthamstow votes were cast at Sir George Monoux College and Richmond upon Thames College was the venue for the count in Twickenham and Richmond Park constituencies.

A spokesperson for the Association of Colleges (AoC) said: “In the run-up to the General Election AoC has been encouraging all college staff and students to get involved in the democratic process by registering and voting. Colleges are an integral part of the local community and so they are an obvious choice to use as polling stations. Bringing young people closer to the action helps them to get engaged with the process.”

FRONTLINE JOBS SAFE AFTER A4E TAKEOVER BUT BACKROOM AT RISK

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The takeover of welfare-to-work provider A4e will not lead to frontline job losses, buyer Staffline has confirmed — but backroom posts from both companies could be in jeopardy, it said.

The £35.4m deal, reported by *FE Week* last month, will make Nottingham-based recruitment service firm Staffline one of the biggest Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Work Programme contractors, the company claimed.

A spokesperson for Staffline said: “We’re fortunate in that they’re operating in completely separate contract areas.

“No frontline staff job losses. But over the next three months work will take place to review back office jobs — but we don’t really know what the results will look like yet.”

She confirmed that existing Staffline jobs, as well as those from A4e, would be considered under the review. Staffline currently employs around 2,000 staff and A4e has roughly the same number.

Staffline’s recruitment division, which had a final 2014/15 Skills Funding Agency (SFA) contract worth £540k, was rated as good by Ofsted last month. Its Eos Works division was allocated £955k of European Social Fund (ESF) cash by the SFA while Avanta, a £65m acquisition last summer, had an SFA allocation of £8.2m and was rated as good by Ofsted last month.

A4e had a £30m SFA allocation and posted pre-tax losses of £11.5m in 2012-13, but had climbed to a pre-tax profit of £2.2m for the year ending March 2014.

The buyout, which includes the transfer of £11m of A4e debt to Staffline, will mean Staffline has a presence in half of the DWP Work Programme’s 18 regions as a prime contractor — through its Eos and Avanta divisions, and now A4e — and six further regions as a sub-contractor.

The firm claims the takeover will give it access to learners through 150 sites throughout the UK — which, it claims, is the largest geographical reach of any Work Programme contractor.

Staffline chief executive Andy Hogarth said the company was “delighted” by the acquisition, calling it “an exciting milestone in Staffline’s growth”.

It is understood that Avanta and Sheffield-based A4e will be “integrated” and rebranded PeoplePlus over the coming months.

The move comes three months after 10 former A4e employees were sentenced for fraud and related offences after falsely claiming to have found work for learners who were unemployed or did not exist. Its control systems were since said to have been improved.

Andrew Dutton, chief executive of A4e, said the buyout meant “starting a new chapter in the history of A4e”.



The rise of the grade three pr

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The proportion of colleges and independent learning providers (ILPs) ordered to improve by Ofsted is on the rise, *FE Week* research has found.

Sector bodies have raised concerns the trend in results so far this calender year versus the same period last year is evidence Ofsted has raised the benchmark for FE providers — or is failing to measure them appropriately.

Analysis by *FE Week* revealed of all 57 general FE colleges, sixth form colleges and ILPs inspected and reported on between January 1 and May 5, 33 per cent had their Ofsted rating changed to a grade three, or 'requires improvement'. For the same period last year that figure stood at 17 per cent of 64 inspections.

The newly-awarded grade threes all represent a drop from a grade two, apart from the grade given to A4e last year, when it had worked its way back up to a grade three. The proportion of new grade one results fell 3 percentage points, with no new grade ones so far this year compared to two in the same period last year. And new grade two ratings as a proportion of inspection results fell from 50 per cent last year to 32 per cent, while the proportion of grade fours went from 2 per cent to 9 per cent.

For general FE colleges, 31 per cent of the 16 inspected and reported on so far this year dropped to a grade three, up from 22 per cent.

David Corke (pictured), director of education and skills policy for the Association of Colleges (AoC), said: "The current Ofsted framework doesn't fully capture the scope of what colleges do and this is reflected in an increase in the number of 'requires improvement' grades given. Ofsted appears to have recognised this, which is why they're introducing a new framework to inspect schools and colleges in the same way."

Mr Corke said the new framework "should better assess the complexity of colleges".

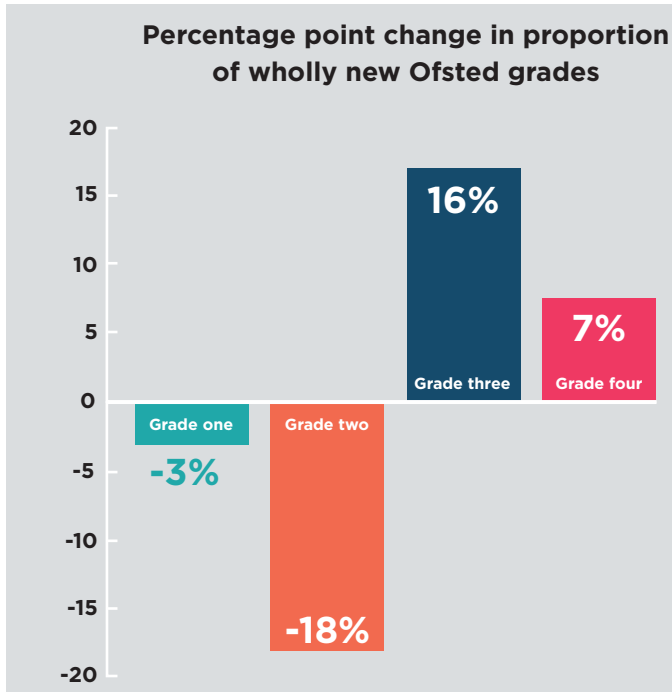
Of the 37 ILPs inspected and reported on this year, 30 per cent got a grade three — up from 17 per cent out of 29 the year before.

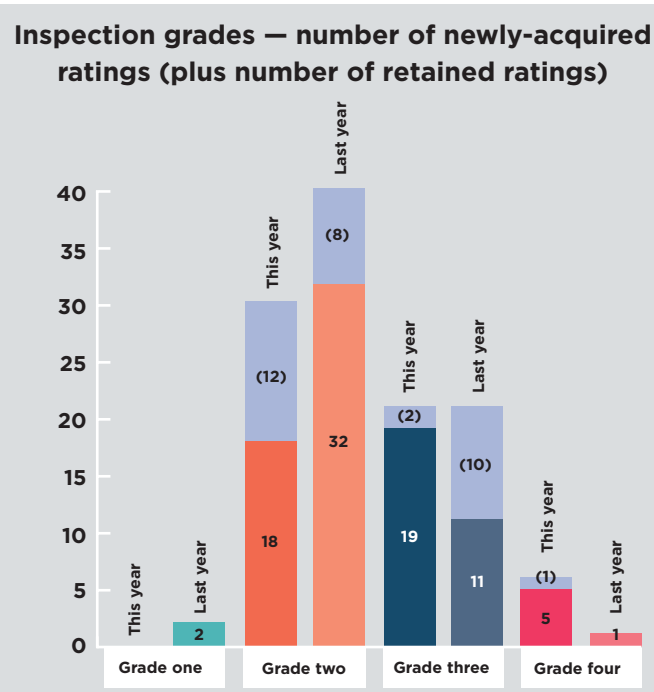
Association of Employment and Learning Providers chief executive Stewart Segal said: "Although the sample of recent inspections is quite small, it does seem that the Ofsted benchmark has been raised and a greater proportion of all providers are getting a grade three than last year. We have said for some time that the pressure on funding in terms of overall budgets and the fact that funding rates have not even kept pace with inflation means that it is really difficult for training providers to get grade one or two.

"Ofsted inspections have to reflect these external factors as well as being driven by success rates and elements such as safeguarding and 'prevent' requirements."

He also called for Ofsted to place more emphasis on satisfaction survey results in its judgements. He added: "With providers under pressure from inspections, it will be important to manage the transition to the new common inspection framework later this year."

Four sixth form colleges have been inspected and reported on since the beginning of the year and all but one (75 per cent) dropped to a grade three — while in 2014, this happened to just





Above graphs relate to GFEs, SFCs and ILPs combined. All graphs based on inspections from January 2014 and 2015 and for which reports were published by May 5 the same year

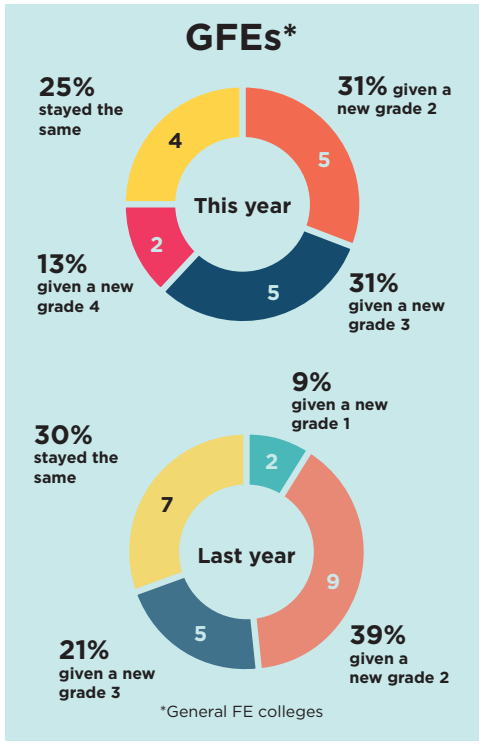
The new grade three cohort of 2015*

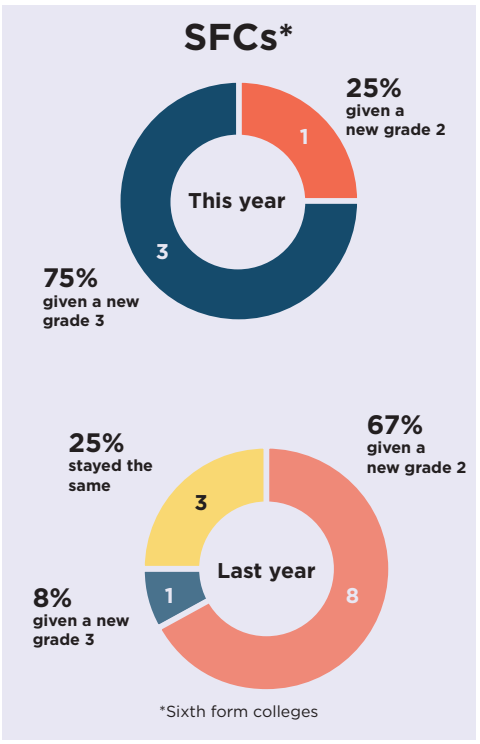
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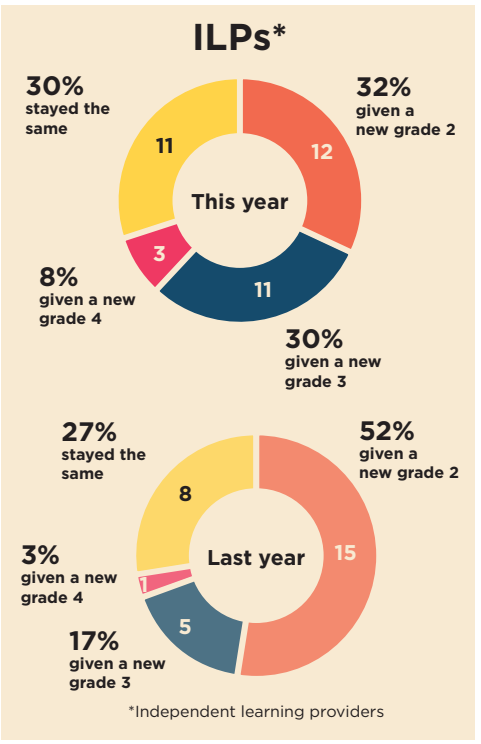
General FE college	Date of inspection	Grade	Date of previous inspection	Grade	+/-
MidKent College	2/3/15	3	2/3/09	2	-1
Tameside College	2/3/15	3	10/6/09	2	-1
Solihull College	9/3/15	3	10/5/10	2	-1
Wigan and Leigh College	9/3/15	3	1/3/10	2	-1
New College Stamford	24/3/15	3	16/5/11	2	-1
Sixth form college					
Bilborough College	20/1/15	3	24/3/09	2	-1
New College Telford	10/2/15	3	19/3/13	2	-1
Strode's College	10/3/15	3	11/5/09	2	-1
Independent learning provider					
The Virtual College	19/1/15	3	13/1/09	2	-1
DBC Training	27/1/15	3		Not previously inspected	
lookfantastic Training Ltd	2/2/15	3	21/6/11	2	-1
Straight A Training Limited	3/2/15	3	8/12/10	2	-1
Nuneaton Training Centre Ltd	10/2/15	3	23/10/12	2	-1
LIGA (UK) LTD	11/2/15	3		Not previously inspected	
Norfolk Training Services Ltd	16/2/15	3	2/8/11	2	-1
The Training & Recruitment Partnership Ltd	23/2/15	3	16/11/10	2	-1
London Vesta College Ltd	4/3/15	3		Not previously inspected	
DV8 Training Ltd	9/3/15	3	23/1/08	2	-1
The Apprentice Academy Ltd	10/3/15	3		Not previously inspected	

*From Ofsted inspections started in 2015 for which reports were published by May 5

ovider — a sector-wide story







one out of the twelve (8 per cent) inspected. Sixth Form Colleges' Association deputy chief executive James Kewin said it was "difficult to draw conclusions" from the four colleges and that he was "confident" the grade three colleges would "bounce back". He added: "The picture for the whole academic year is likely to be less gloomy — we are aware of six colleges that have been inspected recently and their grades have not yet been published."

An Ofsted spokesperson said: "We would caution against reading too much into inspection outcomes for such a short period.

"Since we aim to raise standards in the sector we prioritise those further education colleges and skills providers that are not yet good or better. We will inspect colleges and providers judged to require improvement within two years. In the meantime, inspectors offer challenge and support to help them provide a better service for learners."

The figures show providers inspected between the same periods in both 2014 and 2015 where the report was also published within that period. They do not show providers inspected before January where the report was then released between January and May.

What does a grade three mean for providers?

Up until 2012, getting a grade three meant Ofsted saw you as satisfactory.

But since the last change to the Common Inspection Framework (CIF), a grade three means the provider "requires improvement".

And if a provider gets too many grade threes in a row, Ofsted, under the current CIF has the power to brand them a grade four — inadequate.

Sliding from a grade one or two to a three also means the provider will no longer be eligible to take on new traineeships as a prime contractor — and also barred from the direct recruitment of 14 and 15-year-olds.

But a new, unified CIF, providing one framework for inspecting nurseries, schools and FE, is due to introduced from September.

And, as the unified CIF requires all grade two, or good, providers to be re-inspected at more frequent, three-year intervals, the opportunities to slip into grade three status will come around more often.

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FE archive dating back 100 years s

A long-forgotten collection of key documents hidden away in the dimly-lit basement of a Somerset lodge for nearly half a century before their chance discovery led to pride of place at a London institute — it's certainly not your average FE and skills storyline, writes Paul Offord.

But it's one that stars New College Telford governor and Association of Colleges Governors' Council member Graham Briscoe and a huge collection of records at the Institute of Education (IoE) that charts the history of FE dating back to the early 20th Century.

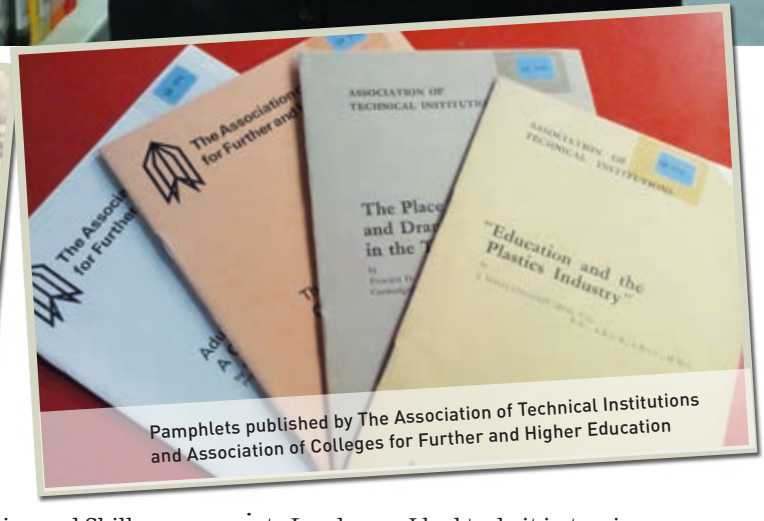


Reporter Paul Offord in the Institute of Education vaults checking out a book from the Coombe Lodge Collection

New College Telford governor Graham Briscoe



Staff and students from the FE Staff College pictured around 1963



Pamphlets published by The Association of Technical Institutions and Association of Colleges for Further and Higher Education

Almost 900 boxes stuffed with document upon documents charting the development of FE over the last century would have been lost forever if it wasn't for the quick-thinking of a college governor.

The collection of books, official reports and other archives had been part of the library at the former FE Staff College in Coombe Lodge, Somerset, which was a national training centre for sector leaders for more than 40 years from the 1950s.

The documents were stored in the basement and largely forgotten about after Coombe Lodge, which was built in 1932 by the Bristol-based cigarette-manufacturing Wills family, closed as a training centre in 2002 and was turned into a privately-run conference and wedding venue.

Graham Briscoe, who was a governor at that time for Coleg Gwent, in South Wales, and City of Bath College, came across them in 2008, during a lunch break while working there as a Saturday conference porter.

He recalled how his quick thinking, after the building changed hands in 2009, saved what is now known as The Coombe Lodge Collection from being dumped.

"I had been developing a portfolio of housing association non-executive directorships and governorships at colleges after retiring (as operations support leader for insurance company the Royal Sun Alliance Group), but had nothing to do on a Saturday, so took on the conference porter job and was fascinated to find the archive in the basement," said Mr Briscoe.

"I used to spend my lunchtimes opening up boxes and reading through the papers, as I'm a bit of a heritage nerd like that."

But he said: "I heard that the new company that took on Coombe Lodge was going to have a clear-out and throw all the boxes in a skip. I thought 'No you're not' and got to work on a rescue plan."

Mr Briscoe asked his friend Mick Fletcher, who was head of training at Coombe Lodge from 1989 until 1995, to accompany him to the basement to check through the boxes and make sure they were worth saving.

"The library at Coombe Lodge basically went when it closed as a training centre and I wasn't aware of how many of the records had been retained," said Mr Fletcher.

"It was really fortunate that Graham knew they were there. I saw straight away what an important historical record they were for our sector and wanted to help."

Mr Fletcher, a regular *FE Week* expert and member of the Policy Consortium, put Mr Briscoe in touch with the IoE, in London, which agreed to take on the archive that includes many FE-related local authority and government documents and reports published by the now defunct Association of Technical Institutions (ATI) and Association of Colleges for Further and Higher Education (ACFHE) dating back to the turn of the 20th Century.

Mr Briscoe also secured around £500 funding from the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) to fund the hire of a white Ford Transit van and petrol to transport the boxes to the IoE.

"After getting the funding, I decided to do the move myself as quickly as possible," said Mr Briscoe.

"I had to carry each box up a winding turret-style staircase from the basement and across a corridor to a door where the van was parked."

He added: "There were far too many boxes to fit in the van, which I then drove to London, so I had to do it in two journeys over two weekends. I was really happy to save what's a very important archive of the history of the sector."

Paul Grainger, co-director of the centre for post-14 research and innovation at IoE, took charge of the collection after it was dropped-off by Mr Briscoe.

He said: "It took Dr Norman Lucas [IoE senior lecturer in post-compulsory education] and I a month to sift through the material and discard duplicate documents and books that we already had at the IoE.

saved from being dumped in skip





Paul Grainger, co-director of the centre for post-14 research and innovation at IoE



Coombe Lodge in the 1960s
credit: John Hucklebridge
Inset: Further Education Trust for Leadership president Dame Ruth Silver

ARCHIVES SHOW HOW HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF FOR THE SECTOR

Reporter Paul Offord delved into the Coombe Lodge collection to see what had changed in the sector over the last century and, in many, cases what had not.

"It was just the two of us, shirt sleeves rolled-up and late evenings, with books stacked in our offices, on the stairs, along the corridor. The health and safety people had the heeby jeebies.

"When we had whittled it down to a room full, we got it transferred to a small room at the library to await cataloguing."

The IoE then secured another £12,000 funding from LSIS to pay professional librarian Stephen Pickles to catalogue all the items, before the collection was finally unveiled to the public in March 2013.

They say history repeats itself and I was struck by a sense of déjà vu as I read through FE-related pamphlets and books dating back 100 years.

So many of the documents I discovered in the IoE library vaults, which were mostly published by Association of Colleges predecessor bodies the ACFHE and ATI, dealt with issues that I have become familiar with at *FE Week*.

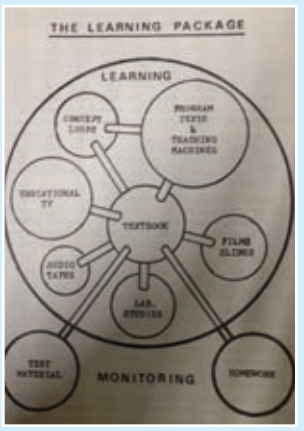
A pamphlet documenting an ACFHE summer conference in June 1977, for example, indicated that problems with poor careers advice for school students about FE are nothing new. The historical report said that "there would be advantages in colleges establishing closer ties with schools, so that the content of college courses reflecting employers' needs could be better understood".

Sector leaders who think recent FE-related government reform proposals, for example aimed at encourage more employer-involvement with apprenticeships, have come too thick and fast for financially-constrained providers could also take solace from an ACFE booklet published in 1979.

The document, called Education and Training of 16 to 18s, warned that "government must be resistant to temptations to make changes where none are needed. There can be a high price to be paid for disruption of established systems". It also noted a reluctance on the part of employers to support FE training schemes and concluded that "breakthroughs to achieve a positive employer attitude… may not be achieved without promotion by central government".

Further Education Trust for Leadership president Dame Ruth Silver, who trained at Coombe Lodge in the 1980s and signed-off around £13,000 of funding for the Coombe Lodge Collection while LSIS chair, said the lesson for policy-makers was to take note of the cyclical nature of FE. "I was delighted that the collection was saved because it charts our sector's history. People don't realise how much of what we are talking about now has been done or discussed in the past, "she said.

Another example of a recurring issue faced by the sector is the question of what balance should be struck between teacher-based and technology-enhanced learning. Skills Minister Nick Boles provoked controversy by announcing in January that he would not be enforcing the FE Learning Technology Action Group's recommendation that 10 per cent of all course content should be delivered online. James B Thomas had an earlier stab at addressing the thorny 'teacher versus tech' debate in a 1967 ATI pamphlet called Learning Packages for Technical Education.



A diagram illustrating how the 1967 learning package devised by James B Thomas would have worked

He proposed incorporating film slides, education TV, audio tapes and "teaching machines" into lessons and said it was "not a plan to replace lectures but a scheme to improve their effectiveness".

And sector staff of today who feel frustrated by breakdowns in the government's online data collection systems might take solace in how much more labour-intensive the process used to be.

A 1967 ATI booklet, called The Administration of Technical Colleges, said: "At certain times of the year, the 650 colleges have to ask small armies of young women to extract data from the records… count them and then to make marks on pieces of paper either by hand or typewriter. Once sent through, the authority has to use a small army of women to take the marks from the returns and make other marks to process them."

It added that "if means could be found whereby the data in the college records could be extracted from them automatically, then indeed we should be getting somewhere".

And a sobering picture of the sector, it staff and learners, emerges from the 1917 ATI yearbook. It said that many people associated with colleges had been "called up to join His Majesty's Forces" to fight in First World War. "All the institutions in the Association have been affected more or less," it said.

"The principals and governing bodies have done all that in them lay to answer the call of the country [by] providing the best men and as many of them as possible for the defeat of the common enemy."

The ATI and Association of Principals of Technical Institutions also produced a pamphlet in 1938, in preparation for the Second World War, entitled Air Raid Precautions in Technical Institutions.

It said: "A blackout may be imposed at certain times. The memorandum is issued without prejudice to the question of whether or not ordinary evening classes should be kept up in the event of the outbreak of war."

FE WEEK COMMENT

Keep grade four mess to a minimum

Between them, Lewisham Southwark College and Greenwich Community College have around 23,000 learners — or in Ofsted-esque parlance that many learners are in provision that is inadequate.

Their similarities in Ofsted grades, not to mention their close South East London proximity, might make the suggestion of merger appear logical.

But it's a move that should not be taken lightly. As Dame Ruth says, we could just end up with one big grade four mess. Merger in itself is no solution — remember K College?

The situation, again as Dame Ruth puts forward, requires a wider view, and on this basis questions should be asked as to why such a review has taken place in Nottingham and not South East London.

The East Midlands city's two colleges are both (relatively) mere grade three-rated providers and while finances are said to be an issue at one, exactly the same can be said of Greenwich.

It's just over two years ago that, reporting in FE Week and armed with research on falling Ofsted grades, I asked if we had 'a capital in crisis?'

So, with the new Government taking shape and potential new Skills Ministers being sounded out, we have an early request for the new post-holder. Give us a review.

Chris Henwood
chris.henwood@feweek.co.uk

TOP COLLEGE VOTING DAY TWEETS

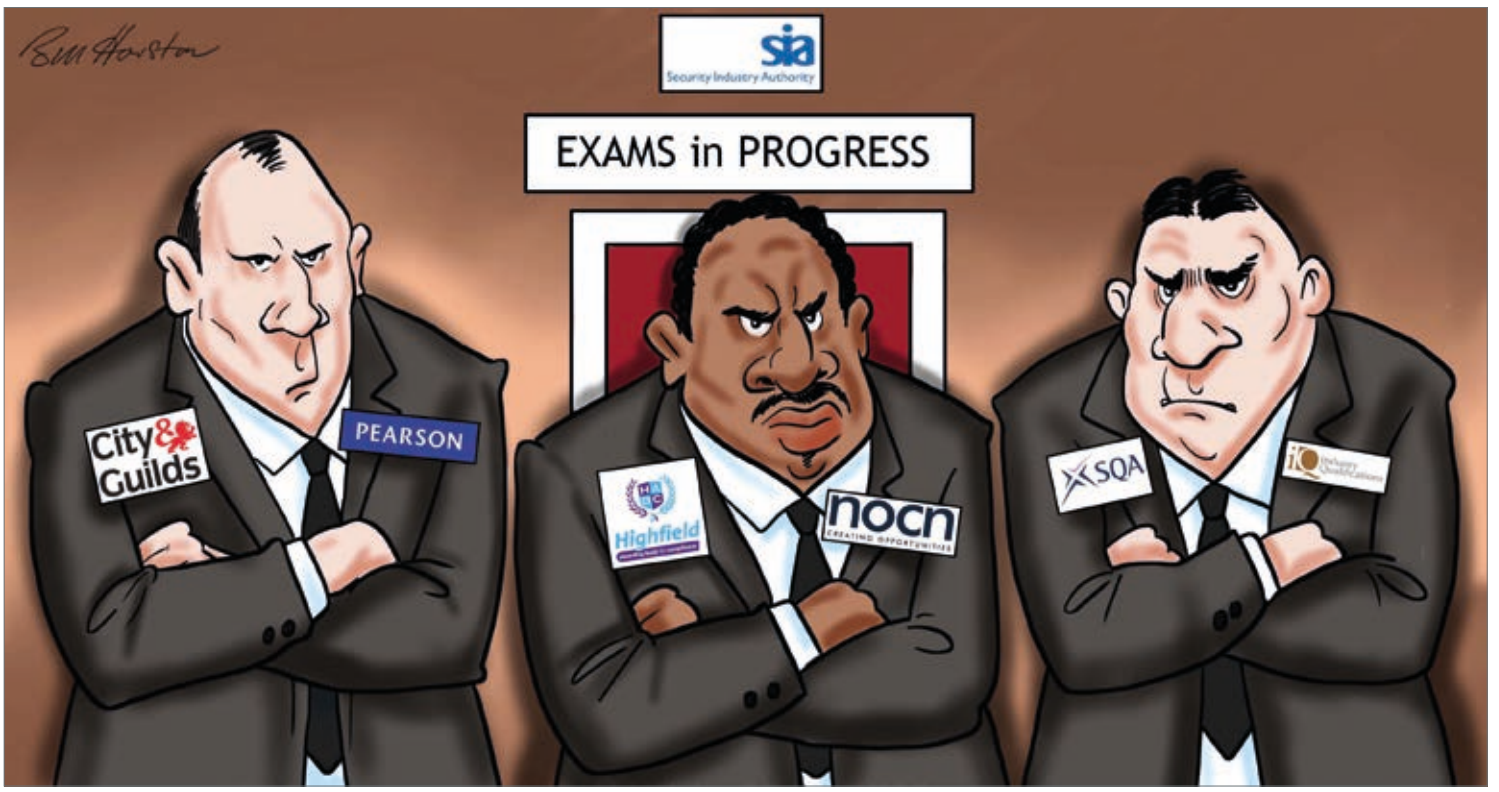
@LutonSixthForm: We're not just a college today - we're a #GE2015 polling station too. Make sure you vote! :-)

@stretchybrown: Right to vote exercised. And pleased to see so many local teenagers voting on their way to college #GE2015

@UoMTheAtrium: The nearest polling station to north campus is Shena Simon Campus, Manchester College. Get there before 10pm to vote!! #GE2015 #vote

@GreenEmmaB:@SSFCShrewsbury students - if you're 18 please remember to vote in #GE2015 as well as the college election! Polling stations open until 10

@BDC50years: What you can expect at the polling station #students. You can vote at the college on 7th May #ELECTION2015 #GE2015



Tough doorman quals assurance after fraud probe

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Awarding organisations have spelled out their "rigorous" anti-fraud measures for private security industry training after it emerged that 129 security guard licenses were set to be revoked after malpractice.

An undercover BBC investigation aired in March alleged staff at Ashley Commerce College (ACC), in Ilford, were prepared to sit exams for students training to work as security guards. It sparked a wider investigation into "fraudulent practices" at ACC by awarding organisation (AO) Industry Qualifications (IQ), which led this month to it revoking 251 level two and three door supervision and CCTV surveillance qualifications it had certificated for the provider.

And sector regulating body the Security Industry Authority (SIA) has now told *FE Week* that it had "started" revoking 129 licenses given out to security guards who passed the IQ courses at ACC.

Raymond Clarke, chief executive of IQ, said: "We carry out rigorous checks on providers. We actually visited ACC three times in the year leading up to these revelations, because of the high volume of qualifications they were giving out and they seemed to be a very good provider giving high quality training. Unfortunately, there was a back office there which we did not know about that was feeding a lesser number of fraudulent exams alongside the genuine ones. We passed on information about all 251 qualifications that were given out fraudulently to the SIA and police."

A Metropolitan Police spokesperson said it was "working closely with the SIA" to investigate alleged fraudulent activity and the Home Office said it "will be informed of the outcome".

ACC was unavailable for comment.

Other AOs that run door supervision and public space surveillance qualifications, provided by hundreds of independent learning providers and a number of colleges across the UK, said they had strict security measures in place. A spokesperson for Pearson said it carried out "unannounced spot checks on test days on providers offering our BTec security qualifications".

Terry Bloor, Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance quality assurance manager, said it placed "undercover mystery shoppers on full courses" and held "regular, unannounced audits".

A City and Guilds spokesperson said: "We work closely with the SIA and Ofqual to make sure all centres use best-practice training methods."

Dr David Hutchinson, deputy managing director of NOCN (previously the National Open College Network), said: "You have to be careful who you use as a training centre and we are very particular about checking them out."

A Scottish Qualifications Authority spokesperson said it enforced "robust quality assurance processes".

And IQ published proposals for regulatory reforms on its website following the ACC investigation. Its paper called on the SIA to issue licenses to trainers and directors/owners of private security industry training providers.

It added the SIA and exams regulator Ofqual should keep a record of centres and staff found guilty of malpractice for reference.

An SIA spokesperson said: "Any extension to the regulatory powers of the SIA would require primary legislation by parliament."

An Ofqual spokesperson declined to comment on the proposals, but said: "We have been notified of this incident [involving ACC] and are keeping it under review."

COMMENTS

FE Commissioner launches city-wide review looking at merging Nottingham's two biggest colleges

Less choice in educational establishments for young people. Monopoly
Amazing how a college that is not able to sustain itself can be handed 12 million in funds.
Capital investment seems to only happen to large establishments that are failing.
Banks now Colleges how much longer are we to prop up these failing organisations with Tax payers money?
Graham Leggett

Education and Training Foundation workforce survey highlights Functional Skills teacher recruitment problem

With such uncertainty in funding there is no incentive to take on staff on a full time basis, there is only risk. We've all seen the recent stories of providers with in financial difficulty and the commissioner going in, so in some ways you there is an incentive not to hire full time staff for the sake of prudence.
Alongside, the funding rates for functional skills are nowhere near what funding was for English / maths in the old funding mechanism, so more efficiencies have to be found (screwing down the GLH being one of them).
Matthew

Dear Dr Sue



Email DrSue@feweek.co.uk for help from sector agony aunt Sue Pember on the third Monday of every month. The best question wins a £100 Amazon gift card

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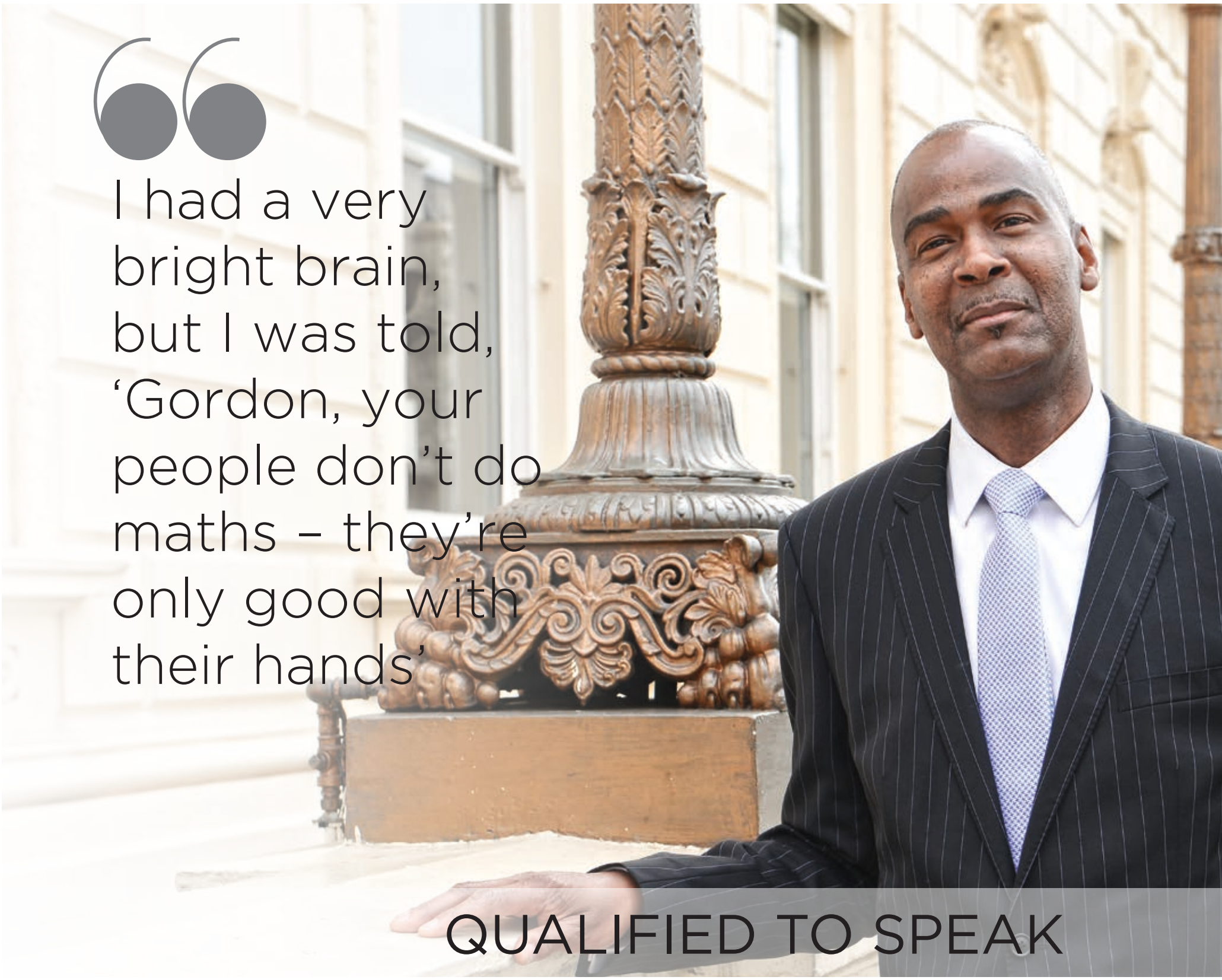
- It's an information and advice service designed help all young people make the right post-16 choices – not just those looking to go on to higher education.
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UCAS Progress

PROFILE



QUALIFIED TO SPEAK

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Trevor Gordon was the equalities officer at South East London’s Lewisham Council in the early 1990s when he was involved in a heated debate with senior officials.

He was about to make a point when his boss “devastatingly” cut him short, saying ‘Trevor, you can’t speak — because you’re just not qualified to speak’.

It is a memory that clearly still stings the 56-year-old FE management consultant, but it is one that drove Gordon back into education.

“I went to the toilet and cried my eyes out,” he tells me of the incident.

It prompted him to sign up for a degree in social sciences at London South Bank University having left FE in 1976 with a prized A-level.

But for the teenage Gordon, there had been just one ambition. When asked by the careers officer about his future career plans, Gordon said he didn’t care — as long as he could wear a shirt and tie.

“I’d never seen black men in shirts and ties,” he says.

“I’d see them on the buses and the trains. I’d see them in the factories, but I never saw any black men in shirts and ties.”

Gordon was born in Jamaica in 1959, but he and his parents, Linford and Gloria, moved to England in 1961.

“Mum was a qualified nurse, but they wouldn’t let her do that, so she cleaned floors,” he says.

“Mum was from a very wealthy family. My dad was from a very poor family, and they eloped — it’s quite romantic — and then ran away to England together, but it was never going to work. And it didn’t.”

As the marriage ended, Gordon, then aged four, was put into care for four years, before he, brother Michael and sister Maxine went to live with their father.

Their mother left for America, where her qualifications would be recognised, and Gordon didn’t see her again for another 16 years.

She has since died, but Gordon says of their reunion: “I had a fantastic relationship with my mother. At the age of 24, I flew myself to New York and knocked on her door, and she fainted — it was a very emotional moment.

“From that point on it was as if we had never been apart. She was an awesome woman and she sat me down, and explained what happened and I understood. So we had a wonderful relationship.”

But his mother’s experience of prejudice was one he shared at school where, he says, he “suffered serious institutional racism”.

“I had a very bright brain, but I was told, ‘Gordon, your people don’t do maths – they’re only good with their hands’” he explains.

“At that time racism was unreal, just unreal — it wasn’t education, it was containment, and we were radicalised.

“So school for me was just a laugh and a joke, just playing to the stereotype — ‘Well okay if that’s what you think I am that’s what I’ll be.’

“We were the sons and daughters of the immigrants who came after the war to clean up the mess — they weren’t about to educate us.”

At 15, he was thrown out of school but was allowed to come back to sit his exams.

He says it was one of the things that spurred him on to go into education.

“I wanted to make a difference to that whole experience,” he says.

After leaving school, Gordon started college at Kingsway Princeton (now a part of Westminster Kingsway).

“FE turned me around,” he says. proudly.

“I had a brain and college engaged it — so in one year I got six O-levels and an A-level.”

At 18, with first daughter Sharlene, now 36, on the way, he got a job as an agent for printing companies and alongside this took on voluntary youth work with at-risk children.

“I thought I had grown up poor, but these kids were dirt poor,” he says.

“And it was an eye-opener as well, because two of the children I worked with, and I really fell in love with — Michael and



It's a personal thing

What's your favourite book?

The Bible — I absolutely love it. It's my inspiration manual. It's important to me because it's allowed me to deal with a lot of the situations I've been through in a way that I probably wouldn't have otherwise

What do you do to switch off from work?

I listen to music, that's my real kind of coming down. I try to avoid the TV as much as I can these days, and my music ranges from classical piano to jazz, reggae, hip-hop, a bit of rock. That's essentially how I chill, with a glass of wine. And I love travelling. I think as an educationalist, there are three kinds of education. There's your book education, your academic and vocational stuff, there's travelling, and the third is just growing up working class, in a working class community, which is the kind I call 'street' education

What's your pet hate?

Racism and nepotism, particularly phenotypic [skin colour] racism. I have fought it all my life, and I hate it with a passion. And I have seen a lot of nepotism in my career as well, I have seen a lot in FE, and I think it's one of the reasons why we have in some instances the quality of managers that we have — because they haven't been recruited to posts based on experience and ability. Unfortunately, education is high in nepotism

If you could invite anyone, living or dead, to a dinner party, who would it be?

I would like Jesus Christ, Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King. And the reason is that I can't think of three other men of colour who have had so much influence on the world, and I would just like to sit down at a table with them and just talk about the world — it would be awesome

What did you want to be when you were growing up?

I won a child scholarship at the age of eight to Guild Hall to act. I was in a play at school and then they put it into the local civic centre, and I was seen by some people by Guild Hall who said they would give me a scholarship. The play was called The Reluctant Dragon — and I was the dragon who didn't want to set fire to people. It was interesting, because nobody saw me because I had a mask on, so nobody saw a black kid under there. But my dad wouldn't let me go. He said the 'only black person on TV is Sidney Poitier — and I'm not sending my son to train to be an actor because he won't have a career'









Clockwise from top: Gordon speaking at the Newbubbles Learning Revolution Conference in March. Gordon in Spain last year. From left: Gordon's grand-daughter Sarai, aged 10, daughter Iman, 25, grand-daughter Tianna, two, and daughter Naeemah. Gordon with Baroness Doreen Lawrence, receiving the 2002 Stephen Lawrence Award for Education

Natasha — died.

"Their mother went out raving and the pilot flame on the old immersion heater went out and they were gassed. I will never forget that."

Following the tragedy, Gordon decided to pursue a career in youth work and local government and got a job managing a community education centre in Clapham, then as the manager of three centres in Kensington and Chelsea.

By the time he'd got the council job in Lambeth, he had met wife Paulette, and the couple had two young daughters, Iman and Naeemah.

"Paulette was lovely, a wonderful person," Gordon says of his wife, who supported his decision to return to education, despite the financial difficulty it caused the family. Sadly, she died from cancer in 2011.

After seven years part time at South Bank, which included an MSc in sociology, law and social policy, Gordon re-entered the world of FE in 1994, this time as a head of equal opportunity services at Lambeth College, "and never looked back".

"I loved it. I thought it was fantastic. I loved education," he says.

After seven years there, he moved to Croydon College as a vice principal.

However, after a year there he began to be feel "disillusioned" with senior management. And he doesn't mince his words about the bits he wasn't so keen on.

"It took me a bit of time to realise that it's a small world, and there's a lot of nepotism, and a lot of institutional sexism at that time as well — and that hasn't changed, looking at the sector, as much as it could have done — and it's still suffering from the same old racism in parts.

"So yes, I have watched it change, but I have also seen some not so good stuff as well — I have worked with worked with some really wonderful people who have inspired me on my journey, but equally I have met some really God-awful principals."

His particular bugbear, he tells me, is the "small cohort of principals who have never taught, and they have come up through the finance route".

"I think if you did some research you would find a correlation between those colleges that are not getting outstanding, and the fact their chief executives have come up as finance directors," he says.

"We went through a panic in the sector where all of a sudden money became the priority."

After leaving Croydon, he set up Gordon French Associates, offering teacher training and equality and management consultancy, a role which has taken him, he says, into around 300 colleges nationally, and given him a brief stint as dean — principal — of a newly-set up college in Saudi Arabia.

Now, back in the UK, Gordon says he's "going to continue to do what I do, which is teach teachers, drive them to outstanding".

"I am going to continue to do my quality and diversity work, which I love with a passion," he says.

"And I am going to continue to agitate and let people know that FE is an awesome sector."

But he also admits, "deep down, I've always wanted to be a principal".

"But the sector kind of shut me out, because I speak my mind, and because I have been a consultant," he says.

"And also I think in FE there's a glass age ceiling and I think once you hit 50, if you haven't made principal by then, there's a good chance you won't."

But that isn't going to stop him trying he tells me, in a burst of confidence that shows how far he's come since that rebuke at Lewisham Council.

"You give me a college, any college in this country, and in three years I will make it outstanding," he says.

"I am not blowing my own trumpet — I am quite shy, I am quite reserved, but being able to make statements like this comes from my faith, and it comes from knowing that what I am saying is true.

"So I will also occasionally apply for the odd principalship — I still have a good few years left, and I still love FE with a passion, I really do."

EXPERTS

THE INDY SCENE



John Hyde is the chairman of HIT Training, a hospitality training provider that operates across England, and on the second Monday of every month he writes in *FE Week* about issues affecting independent learning providers

I am writing this on the eve of the General Election knowing that by the time you read this all the votes will have been cast and the scramble to form a government will most likely be under way.

Politicians who have been rubbishing their competitors' policies and promises throughout the campaign will be making loving overtures to each other and if the polls are to be believed the future of our county will be decided in the ubiquitous 'smoked-filled rooms' of the parties' managers and not by the ballot box.

Eventually we will welcome the 62nd Skills Minister to pick up the apprenticeship mantle which all the parties have been professing to support and he or she will find out the sad truth of the current state of the programmes.

Apprenticeship numbers are falling, apprenticeship completion rates are falling and apprenticeship funding has been falling throughout the last administration's tenure.

Is there a correlation between reductions in funding and reductions in apprenticeship starts and completions compounded with the continual changes?

As reported in *FE Week*, apprenticeship completion rates have fallen by 5 percentage points over the past three years.

The principal reason for this was the introduction of Functional Skills to replace Key Skills.

At the time of their introduction, both the department and then minister publically stated they were prepared for a 10 percentage point drop in completion rates with the introduction Functional Skills.

It is of some credit to the apprenticeship providers, despite the shortage of specialist maths and English teachers, that completions have only fallen by half than the minister and officials expected.

The introduction of Technical Certificates by David Blunkett many years ago was a sensible way of ensuring apprentices had sufficient theoretical knowledge to support the vocational skills they practiced at their workplace.

However, with the recent Govian wave of tests and tests and more tests, driving out assessment of these theory skills by assignments and projects, many practically-minded apprentices who are both competent and knowledgeable are failing their online tests.

> **Eventually we will welcome the 62nd Skills Minister to pick up the apprenticeship mantle which all the parties have been professing to support and he or she will find out the sad truth of the current state of the programmes**

Again, ministerial bias for exams adds nothing to the skill set of the apprentices and reduces completion rates for no apparent advantage, rather to the disadvantage of those who have difficulty taking examinations.

Much is made of individual learners' learning styles, but styles of assessing, quantifying and marking their achievements does not reflect this.

So, new Skills Minister, when you unravel your brief you won't find a simple apprenticeship scheme for you to expand.

Your predecessor left a half open can of worms that ignored progression to provide an apprenticeship framework that met the needs of the employer, the learner, the community and the national economy, not just the narrow needs of the employer.

Compulsory employer contributions became blurred as did the funding route.

The employer pilot scheme failed badly and where employers delivered apprenticeship themselves without a provider or college, they achieved disastrously low completion rates averaging 40 per cent. But then empirical evidence was always behind political expediency.

So what's the betting on how many ministers we will have if the new administration goes the full five-year term — will we reach the 70 mark?

Will skills, FE and higher education remain with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills or return to the Department for Education and can Peter Lauener still straddle both the Education Funding Agency and the Skills Funding Agency?

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NICK WARREN
Policy Consortium member and FE marketing consultant

Behind the scenes of the 2015 FE & Skills Survey

The hard work in designing, analysing and interpreting on the FE & Skills Survey that featured in the last edition of *FE Week* was carried out by the Policy Consortium. Nick Warren outlines the process.

The FE & Skills Survey 2015 revealed a higher level of concern than we anticipated about government priorities, mentioned in a remarkable 16 per cent of responses as of greater concern than funding. This has surprised us. It may not surprise you.

Research is worth little if it does not sometimes come up with surprising findings. And those in the annual survey conducted by the Policy consortium in partnership with *FE Week* demand attention, particularly in the light of the General Election results.

Recent history and the election campaign have shown us that aside from apprenticeships no one in Whitehall has much conception of what FE does or what impact the shifting funding and policy imperatives have on the day-to-day work of the sector.

Yet, across the nation, FE continues to deal with (according to the latest figures from the Association of Colleges) a simply astonishing 3.1 million students each year. Furthermore, FE is in a constant state of reinventing itself to respond to rapidly changing funding and policy priorities. We have a lot to be proud of. We adapt.

We decided to find out last year what those at the chalk face thought and how the sector looked and felt from the inside. It turned out to be a bigger job than we expected. It seems simple, but we had to agree what to ask and how much free response to offer.

Anyone who has tried to devise a survey will know how hard it is. We set out to discover what kept people awake at night, but to do so we had to take an educated guess at what kept people awake at night.

We needed to identify a range of things that concerned the entire sector, including governors, principals, teaching staff and admin staff alike. See the sequence? I started from the "top" there out of habit, I realise. We should start from delivery, because that is the "top". We also wanted to give scope to people to express their views on things we had not thought of.

We thought it important to make the questions as neutral as possible across the topics we eventually settled on and to enable people to enlarge on or explain their answers.

A survey team of around a dozen Policy Consortium members, each with specialist expertise, sifted the results and made sense of the figures and comments in their narrative commentary. The open responses in the "anything you want to add" question 33 were grouped thematically. A copy editor kept us in line. A lot of people are involved and no one gets paid.

We might have expected a good deal of moaning and special pleading, but in fact the majority were measured in their responses.

The sector did not let us down. If anything, concerns were even more sharply focussed and were strikingly consistent.

Our colleague Mick Fletcher, commenting on the broad sweep of the survey, acutely noted that funding cuts, which we might have expected to be at the top of the list took second place to a range of other concerns clustered around "systemic failure": the status of the sector, competition, institutional viability and the impact on learners.

After the first survey was published we were invited to address the Labour Business, Innovation and Skills front bench team in the Lords. The Government team expressed no such interest.

> **We needed to identify a range of things that concerned the entire sector, including governors, principals, teaching staff and admin staff alike**

By the time you read this the election will be over and we might even have a new Government. The publication date this year was carefully chosen. If and when we know the names of the BIS, Government and Opposition teams (and whether FE even remains in BIS) the report will go to them. We hope they take the chance to read and reflect.

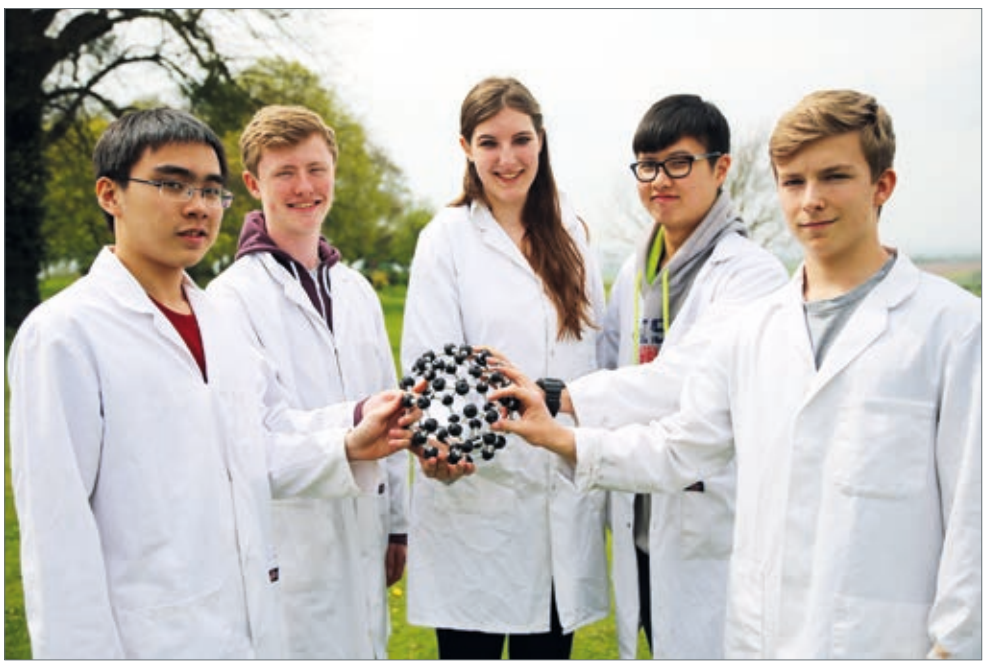
The full report will be available early next week.

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EVENT DATES
PRESENTED BY NICK LINFORD AUTHOR OF THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO FUNDING APPRENTICESHIPS, AND BOTH THE HANDS-ON GUIDE TO POST-16 FUNDING AND THE HANDS-ON GUIDE TO POST-16 PERFORMANCE AND DATA.
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BIRMINGHAM
05-06-15 : 10:30 - 15:30PM
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CAMPUS ROUND-UP

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Student chemists find solutions



Hartpury's chemistry A-level students who achieved medals in the chemistry olympiad. From left: Ly Xuan Bach, Oliver Brown, Rachel Johnson, Ka Hin Ng and Nick Gallagher

Five Hartpury College students found the formula for success as they clinched gold, silver and bronze medals at a chemistry olympiad.

The learners — who all study A-level chemistry — had to complete a challenging written test of chemical knowledge in the Royal Society of Chemistry's annual competition.

Rachel Johnson, aged 18, was the Gloucestershire college's star performer as she clinched a gold medal.

First year students Nick Gallagher, 17, and Ly Xuan Bach, 18, achieved silver medals.

Ka Hin Ng, 17, also achieved silver, while Oliver Brown, 17, won bronze.

Hartpury chemistry A-level lecturer Sion Wall said: "For five students to win medals for their academic performance up against the brightest young chemistry talent in the country is an incredible achievement, especially when two of the students are only first years."



Stoke on Trent College sport student Sallie Tranter supports stroke survivor Gavin Yorke

Sporty learners help recovery

Sport students at Stoke on Trent College are using their knowledge to aid the rehabilitation process for people who have survived strokes.

Each week, members of the Stroke Association have been attending the college's sports academy to benefit from the learners who provide one-to-one support aimed at improving mobility and fitness.

Sallie Tranter, aged 17, who studies a BTec level three extended diploma in sport and exercise science, said: "I have never worked with people who have had strokes before but it is really nice to see them develop more confidence as the weeks go on."

Services have included devising individual exercise programmes as well as health checks, such as blood pressure, height, weight and BMI.

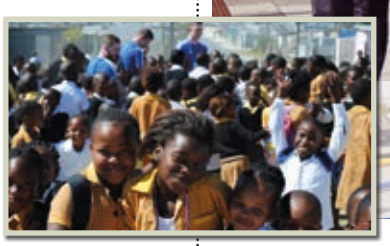
Anthony Brannen, assistant director for sport and public services at the college, said: "It has been a huge learning curve, but one that will remain with them [the students] in their chosen careers."

Cape Town youngsters' warm football welcome

FEATURED CAMPUS ROUND-UP

A group of Merseyside college learners had their eyes opened to the world of poverty as they left their first class facilities behind and headed to Cape Town to coach football to disadvantaged children, writes Billy Camden.





Main pic from left: Steph Bond, sport lecturer Lyndsey Jamieson, Anthony Jones, Greg Page, Leo Hanley and trip organiser Mike Carney. Inset right: Inset left: The Hugh Baird team get swamped by primary school children upon arriving in Cape Town

Being met with school settings of wooden huts and dusty waste grounds covered in rubble and rubbish was a stark contrast to life at home for a team of Hugh Baird College sport students and lecturers.

But despite the "worse than expected" facilities, the group — who visited the South African city of Cape Town to coach football to pupils — were greeted with overwhelming enthusiasm and smiles.

"We were treated like celebrities," said sports lecturer Lyndsey Jamieson.

"It is very unusual for them to see people from our background and girls with long blonde hair which was a big fascination for them."

The team of four BTec sport and fitness students included Leo Hanley, aged 27, Greg Page, 19, Anthony Jones, 16, and Stephanie Bond, 18, who all coached structured football sessions aimed at developing the youngsters' skills while also developing their English language skills.

Some of the most deprived schools had classes of 40 students, with not enough tables and chairs to seat the children. Students had no PE kits and many participated in bare feet against the vicious terrain, which came as a shock to the Hugh Baird students.

"The kids there have got so little but they are so happy with it. It really puts in perspective what we take for granted here," said Leo.

"But I did love it out there. It was a once in a lifetime experience of going and seeing different kids, seeing how they live and the different cities in a different part of the world was a real eye opening experience."

And the trip had a career defining influence on Greg, who wants to be a sports coach.

"It has had a massive impact on me since we got back. Looking at how they live out there put into perspective how we live here and how appreciative they are compared to us," he said.

"Seeing how the children benefited from us and the joy they got from it, I would definitely say that the trip has cemented my goal of wanting to be a coach."

It wasn't just all work as the group had plenty of opportunity to experience Cape Town as tourists — they surfed, went diving with sharks, sunbathed with penguins and took in the views of the Cape from Table Mountain.

But the experiences with the African children are the main memories to be taken back.

Lyndsey said: "I am extremely proud of the perseverance of the students despite the long days, heat, language barriers, facilities and sometimes lack of rest.

"They have learned a lot about the world they live in, the problems that some people face just to survive and how well-off we are in our educational setting and facilities."

The trip was made possible through HQ Coaching's, 'Engage for South Africa' project, where UK volunteers are arranged to teach or coach sport in poverty-stricken schools.

DO YOU WANT TO BE IN CAMPUS ROUND-UP?

Send your stories with pictures to campus@feweek.co.uk including names, ages and course details of students where applicable

& MOVERS SHAKERS

Your weekly guide to who's new and who's leaving



Sir Geoff Hall



Nick Lewis



Mike Hopkins



Melanie Hunt

Former Education and Training Foundation (ETF) interim chief executive Sir Geoff Hall has been appointed general secretary of the Principals' Professional Council (PPC).

He took over from Nick Lewis, who served as PPC General Secretary for the past four years, from today (May 11).

Sir Geoff, a former principal and chief executive of New College Nottingham and chair of the Information Authority, who was knighted for services to FE in the New Year Honours 2012, said: "My aim is to continue Nick's work in providing support to colleagues in the FE sector.

"There are a number of major issues for the FE sector at this time. One of these is coping with the incredibly challenging financial circumstances facing colleges and how this will be approached by government and the sector over the next five years.

"In addition, PPC has an important role to play in helping to ensure the success of colleges. We have many excellent and experienced principals who can support newer principals."

Mr Lewis said: "To have as my successor Sir Geoff can only lead PPC from strength to strength."

The appointment of Sir Geoff completes a revamp at the top of the PPC with South Thames College principal Sue Rimmer having been elected chair in January.

She said: "Sir Geoff brings a wealth of skills and experience and will build on the good work that Nick has done over the past four years, helping PPC to make sure that the voice of principals is both heard and respected."

Meanwhile, Ms Rimmer's predecessor in the PPC chair, Mike Hopkins, will become principal at Sussex Downs College from September, it has been announced.

He was previously chief executive of the federation between Middlesbrough College and Gateshead College, but was left without a role after the organisation was disbanded late last year after just 12 months.

He takes over at Sussex Downs from retiring Melanie Hunt, who started as principal at the college five years ago. The pair will be working together, along with governors and college staff, in the interim to ensure a smooth changeover.

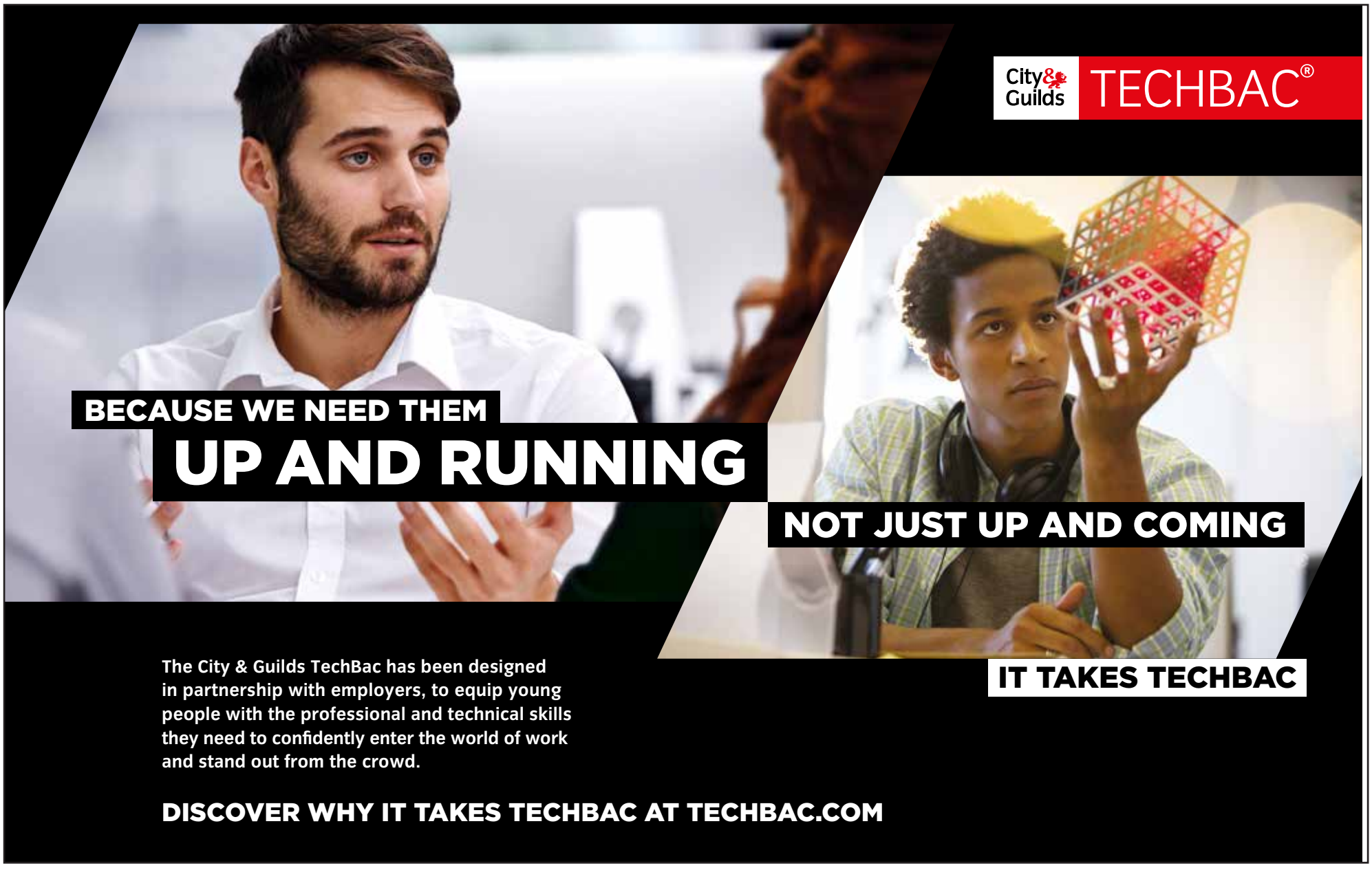
Mr Hopkins said: "I am thrilled and honoured to have been asked to become the next principal of Sussex Downs College. The college is full of committed and able staff. I look forward to leading them into the next stage of the college's development.

"I want the college to be a high quality driver of sustainable economic growth and an engine of social mobility."

Henry Ball, chair of the governing body, said: "Mike brings a wealth of knowledge and experience together with a vision for the future which will place the college at the centre of education and training in the wide range of communities we serve."

Mrs Hunt said: "I absolutely love Sussex Downs College, and have been incredibly proud and privileged to lead a college where I have been — at various points in my life — a student, a parent and a member of staff. I shall miss it."

To let us know of any new faces at the top of your college, independent learning provider, awarding organisation or other sector body email news@feweek.co.uk



JOBS

Director of Operations and Quality

CAREERS@ FIRST4SKILLS

First4Skills, one of the UK's largest private work based training providers, has an exciting new opportunity for a Director of Operations and Quality to join our Executive Team. The salary for this position is circa £85k - £90k including car allowance and benefits.

We have over 30 years' experience and a great track record of ensuring that businesses right across the UK have access to a workforce with the right skills to improve their performance - now and into the future. With access to millions of pounds worth of government funding, we provide high quality, industry recognised qualifications helping to remove the financial pressures for businesses and working as true business partners - putting learners at the heart of everything we do.

As Director of Operations & Quality, you will drive effective delivery in a complex, national and multi-function service that gives young people qualifications and skills for their future through the Learner Journey.

Working closely with all stakeholders within the business, this key role will ensure total learner and client satisfaction is achieved by great service and outstanding delivery of all components of our programmes. Through Operational Excellence, successful delivery of our contracts and outstanding learner retention, success and progression rates, you will ensure successful achievement of all business objectives.

The successful candidate will have considerable experience at Senior Manager/ Exec level in a similar business and have a successful track record of successfully influencing and contributing to the overall business strategy and achieving objectives. Educated to degree standard (or equivalent) you will have an understanding of work based learning and have highly developed interpersonal, motivational, influencing skills and a great level of enthusiasm.

In return, we will provide excellent training and development with a competitive salary including car allowance. You will also be entitled to our great benefits package, Handpicked4you which includes company pension and BUPA.

To apply: For information on working with us and full details of all our vacancies, visit our website
www.first4skills.com/careers-at-first4skills

Application closing date: 15 May 2015

First4Skills is an equal opportunities employer – Strictly no agencies

Plumpton College

PRINCIPAL AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Six figure salary plus attractive package and accommodation

Due to the retirement of the current post holder, this is an exciting opportunity for a suitably experienced and qualified person to lead this specialist land-based College through the next phase of its development.

To be successful, you will have a significant track record of raising achievement, together with leadership and management at a senior level. You will have a good understanding of the land-based sector with the ability to manage and grow a complex and diverse business. In addition, you will have experience of innovative provision of vocational programmes at both FE and HE level.

The College has a strong and supportive governing body and has benefited from considerable investment in recent years, in both teaching resources and facilities for students, at its main site and at its various out centres.

If you feel you have the ambition, passion, drive and vision to take the College forward, we would be interested to hear from you.

For a confidential discussion about the post, please contact Malcolm Wharton of MW Education Business Consultants on 07768 092626, or Dr R A Stanier, Chair of Governors on r.a.stanier@brighton.ac.uk

To apply online, please visit www.plumpton.ac.uk Alternatively, contact Personnel at Plumpton College, Ditchling Road, Plumpton, East Sussex BN7 3AE, tel: 01273 890454 or email: hr@plumpton.ac.uk for an application pack.

Closing date: Wednesday, 27th May 2015.
Initial interview date: w/c 8th June 2015.

Plumpton College is a Partner College of the University of Brighton. We welcome applications from all sections of the community.

stanmore college

Stanmore College

Executive Director for Finance and Funding

"a very inclusive, safe and welcoming environment"



This is an exciting opportunity to contribute at a strategic level within a small but ambitious general further education college offering a good range of academic and vocational qualifications up to and including higher education. The College has a commitment to delivering the highest possible standards in all aspects and requires a finance director to help us achieve this vision.

We are looking for someone with experience of managing finance and strategic planning and who can take up this key role to ensure a modern and agile organisation providing outstanding value for money.



You will have strong financial management skills but also be resilient, people focused, innovative and a strong performance manager.

If you are interested in this role please apply via our website, www.stanmore.ac.uk

The salary for this post is circa £70,000 plus benefits and relocation if required.

The closing date for applications is Monday, 1st June 2015.
Interviews will be held on Tuesday, 23rd June 2015.

Elm Park, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 4BQ Tel:020 8420 7739 www.stanmore.ac.uk

JOBS

Certa is looking for exceptional individuals for the following key positions:

Certa
National Awarding Organisation & Access Validating Agency

Both posts are mainly office based at our premises in Wakefield and come with excellent terms and conditions.

Quality, Standards and Compliance Manager
£39k - £46k (permanent)

We are looking for a highly experienced person to join our Senior Management Team, to lead and be responsible for ensuring Certa maintains high quality assurance standards and meets Ofqual's regulatory and compliance requirements. Applicants should have extensive experience of implementing and maintaining quality assurance processes and systems, as well as an excellent understanding of qualification frameworks.

Qualifications Development Officer
£30k - £32k (permanent)

Applicants will need to have an excellent working knowledge and experience of the development, writing, review and quality assurance of Qualifications. The post holder will be responsible for driving forward the development, review and maintenance of a selected portfolio of qualifications and programmes and for managing key projects to enhance Certa's qualifications and accreditation products in the market place.

To find Application Packs for each post advertised please visit our website at www.certa.org.uk/about/jobs_at_certa
The closing date for all applications is Monday 29th May 2015, with interviews taking place week commencing 15th June 2015.

Certa is an Awarding Organisation and a Gold accredited Investors in People company, regulated by Ofqual for an extensive range of Qualifications and a licensed Access Validating Agency for the Access to HE Diploma.

Head of Department- Engineering

Full Time (37 hours per week)

Permanent

£39,028-£42,651 per annum

Sandwell College
West Bromwich

Sandwell College is now seeking to appoint an enthusiastic and driven Head of Department who will be responsible for the delivery of Engineering programmes. We are looking for an outstanding leader and teacher who is keen to drive our vision of becoming a Centre of excellence and achieve our goal to make Sandwell College an Outstanding college. You will raise and lead the development of the provision and be proactive in your approach when monitoring and supporting student progress. You will also have significant experience and a proven track record in raising achievement in engineering programmes in a school or FE environment. If you're keen to help us drive the college forward to ensure an excellent experience for our student then we would love to hear from you! We are able to offer you generous holidays, an excellent pension scheme and outstanding college facilities.

A full Job Description and Person Specification is available to download from the college's website at **www.latestvacancies.com/sandwell/,** where applications should be submitted online.

Closing Date for Applications: 21 May 2015

Central Campus Sandwell College is committed to safeguarding children, young people, and vulnerable adults. All appointments are subject to a satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service checks. We aim to develop a workforce that reflects the diverse community we serve and positively encourage applications from all.

JOBS

North Lindsey College

Humber UTC
A University Technical College

The University Centre in Scunthorpe

Engineering Opportunities in North Lincolnshire



North Lincolnshire has a proud tradition in Engineering and Manufacturing and this has provided a firm foundation for some exciting developments, particularly around Renewable Energy with thousands of jobs being created over the next few years. To provide the Engineers, Technicians and Crafts people required by both existing and new employers an investment of over £22m has been made in providing industry standard facilities and equipment. Central to this is the new Engineering and Technology Centre at North Lindsey College, a brand new University Technical College, an Apprentice Training Centre based at Tata Steel and the University Centre at North Lindsey College.

To ensure that we maximise this investment we are looking to recruit high quality, dynamic teachers, lecturers, facilitators and assessors as well as a Head of Engineering to lead these developments.

If you are an existing Lecturer/Teacher or interested in a career in training and education we would love to hear from you. We're particularly looking for electrical, mechanical, fabrication and welding skills and can provide full teacher training for suitable candidates.

Head of Industrial Technology Salary: £40,000 – £45,000 (more maybe available for an outstanding candidate)

North Lindsey College:

Curriculum Leaders
Salary: £33,597 – £36,721 (Post No: 1520)

Lecturers
Salary: £22,201 – £29,926 (Post No: 1524)

Humber UTC:

Senior Lecturers
Salary: £29,926* (Post No: 1522)

Lecturers
Salary: £22,201 – £29,926 (Post No: 1523)

Apprentice Centre – Tata Steel:

Trainer Assessors
Salary: £25,000 – £35,000 (Post No: 1524)

North Lindsey College University Centre:

Lecturers
Salary: £29,845 – £33,597 (Post No: 1525)

* plus additional points based on experience

A market forces payment may be applicable for certain roles.
Teacher training opportunities are available at North Lindsey College & Outwood Grange Academy

For further details please visit
www.northlindsey.ac.uk

Applications should be received by 4pm on
Thursday, 14th May 2015

North Lindsey College · Team Humber Marine Alliance · Outwood Grange Academy · University of Hull · BAE Systems · Cristal · Jacobs · Humber UTC · Royal Air Force · centrica storage · res power for good · able · Tata · North Lincolnshire Council · Singleton Birch · SMart Wind · Clugston

HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND hefce

Head of Skills

Pay band 11 (£65,664 to £75,513)
Bristol or London

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) is responsible for distributing nearly £4 billion a year for teaching and research in universities and colleges in England. The Head of Skills will lead the development and implementation of HEFCE policy to support higher level skills through vocational and tecñical education at all levels of higher education, and through STEM and other strategically important provision.

You will lead a group of staff working on higher level skills and support the Director (Policy) and Chief Executive with expert advice, knowledge of sector and government thinking and an understanding of the practicalities of implementing policy. You will also lead external engagement with government, universities and colleges, and business and intermediary organisations.

You will bring a successful track record at a senior level in a higher education context backed by deep knowledge of issues relating to higher level skills, vocational progression and employer engagement in higher education. You will have managed teams in a fast moving environment and will bring the ability to create new and imaginative approaches, question traditional assumptions and refocus debate on higher level skills.

Benefits include a comprehensive staff development programme, 25 days' annual leave and the opportunity to join the Civil Service Pension scheme.

To find out more, please visit **www.gatenbysanderson.com** quoting reference **GSe21235**. For a confidential discussion please contact our advising consultants at GatenbySanderson: **Jodi MacDougall** on **0113 205 6093** or **Elliott Rae** on **020 7426 3964**.

Closing date: noon 26 May 2015.
The Council is working towards equal opportunities in employment.

GatenbySanderson

Solihull College & University Centre

LECTURERS MATHS OR ENGLISH

Lecturer English – full time / fractional — Post No: LB026
Lecturer Maths – full time / fractional — Post No: LB027
Salary up to £36,427 per annum, pro rata where appropriate

Hourly paid – English — Post No: E/05/15
Hourly paid – Maths — Post No: M/05/15
Hourly rate £23.49 per hour

Solihull College are seeking teachers with a passion for Maths and English, to add to our talented pool of full time, fractional and part time hourly paid teachers of English and Maths.

We are interested to hear from people with a passion for enabling young people and adults to achieve at GCSE and / or Functional Skills in English or Maths. Prior experience in teaching these areas is preferable but more than that, we seek individuals with the ability to engage students in these subjects, make learning accessible and enjoyable, and go the extra mile to enable a diverse range of students to achieve.

The College is a fantastic place to work. We have a strong English and Maths team who actively share good practice and are committed to continual improvement. Support and on-going professional development are a significant part of our work with all English and Maths teachers. Teaching and learning in English and Maths is a real strength.

If you are passionate about English and Maths, confident in your ability to engage a range of students in learning and ready to contribute to our success, there has never been a better time to join Solihull College. You will need to hold or be prepared to work towards a relevant teaching qualification.

Closing date of 17th May 2015

JOBS

Brooklands College

Lecturer in Functional Skills
(September start)

Salary: up to £33,071.28 per annum
(depending on qualifications and experience)

We are seeking to appoint an inspirational teacher who can deliver and maintain high standards and create a positive learning environment for students studying Functional Skills in English and Mathematics up to level 2.

The successful candidate must have a relevant professional level 4 qualification, and a teaching qualification. He/she must be an excellent communicator, be able to work effectively as part of a team and be skilled in the use of IT. An Assessors award would be desirable.

Benefits include: 47 days annual leave, final salary pension scheme, car parking, refectory.

Close Date: 15th May 2015

Positive About Disabled People · Investors in Diversity Achieved Stage 2

For further details and an application form, contact the HR Department by email **hr@brooklands.ac.uk**, or via our website **www.brooklands.ac.uk**

www.brooklands.ac.uk

IT ALL ADDS UP
MATHS TEACHER TRAINING JOB VACANCY

Shipley College
Great People, Great Place

Exciting opportunity for a talented graduate with a mathematics or related degree (STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths) to teach maths in the FE sector.

APPLY NOW! Closing date 22 June '15

You may be about to graduate or be looking to retrain to follow a new career path. You need enthusiasm and drive for education, good ICT skills, effective English language skills (spoken and written) and the ability to work as part of a professional teaching team.

WHAT WE OFFER YOU:

Closing date: 22 June '15
Interview date: 29 June '15
Start date: September '15

- Bursary available up to £25,000.
- Guaranteed teaching hours for the PGCE.
- Comprehensive & supported induction.
- Opportunity to work alongside experienced FE tutors in the delivery of Functional Skills, GCSE and Core maths.
- A mentor to help you develop your teaching, learning and assessment skills.
- Involvement in the College Early Adopters Core maths project in partnership with Selby College which enables wider peer support and development opportunities.
- Guaranteed job interview with Shipley College and a reference on completion of your training.
- Financial incentives at the end of programme if you continue your teaching career. For more information go to www.feadvice.org.uk

"I have enjoyed it here, the variety of levels was a challenge but also very rewarding." - Mark, current maths trainee teacher

For more information and an application form please go to the Shipley College jobs page at www.shipley.ac.uk or call 01274 327395.

South Cheshire College is a successful provider of Further Education in Cheshire and surrounding areas. Situated in a convenient location in Crewe, our £74 million campus which re-opened in 2010 boasts excellent facilities focusing on the achievement of our students.

Inspire Believe Achieve

LECTURER IN MATHEMATICS

Salary up to £36,162 per annum

This is an exciting opportunity for an inspirational and innovative lecturer to join our Mathematics team to provide learners with an excellent learning experience to ensure they reach their maximum educational and developmental potential. Teaching on a range of Mathematics courses up to A-level, you will actively contribute to the success of the College and our vision to be outstanding in all that we do. The post-holder will be a member of the Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. This Faculty is STEM assured.

South Cheshire College

Investors in People | Gold

You will be degree qualified (or equivalent) in Mathematics or a related subject and have a PGCE/Cert Ed (or equivalent) or be working towards. You will have excellent teaching skills, be a team worker and possess the ability to adapt your teaching style to engage and suit the needs of learners to ensure excellent attendance and achievements.

Based in Crewe, we offer excellent benefits including a competitive salary, pension scheme, 35 days annual leave plus 8 bank holidays per year, onsite fitness and childcare facilities, 2 free hair/beauty/spa treatments for staff at our salons and spa, free onsite parking plus lots more.

You can view full details of the vacancy and obtain an application form at www.scc.ac.uk/us/latest-vacancies

Closing date: 17 May 2015

South Cheshire College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Successful applicants will be required to provide a DBS Disclosure.

Ofsted GRADED GOOD · Investor in Careers · Positive About Disabled People · matrix · STEM ASSURED · European Union European Social Fund Investing in jobs and skills

ncfe.

a safe pair of hands.

New Health and Safety qualifications for employment from NCFE.

We've launched a **NEW** suite of short Health and Safety qualifications, which are designed to help employers comply with Health and Safety Executive (HSE) requirements and provide flexible, high quality training to their workforces.

These QCF qualifications are regulated by Ofqual, and suitable for learners of any age who require a basic understanding of Health and Safety for the workplace.

This suite of qualifications includes:

- Level 1 Award in Introduction to Fire Safety for the Workplace
- Level 2 Award in Principles of Fire Safety in the Workplace
- Level 1 Award in Introduction to Health and Safety for the Workplace
- Level 2 Award in Principles of Health and Safety in the Workplace
- Level 2 Award in Principles of Risk Assessment in the Workplace
- Level 2 Award in Principles and Practice of Safe Manual Handling in the Workplace

Our Health and Safety qualifications for employment are:

Competitively priced.

Registration and certification fee = £8 per qualification.

This also includes **two FREE** attempts at assessment.

Supported by quality resources.

This includes interactive e-learning, editable PDF activity sheets and editable PDF workbooks.

Flexible.

Each qualification is assessed via a multiple choice questionnaire, which is proven to be a quick, easy and effective way of assessing knowledge.

Principles and Practice of Safe Manual Handling for the Workplace also includes assessment through a portfolio of evidence, where confirmation of practical manual handling skills can be recorded.

Find out more about our Health and Safety qualifications:
Visit ncfe.org.uk/healthandsafety **Email** switching@ncfe.org.uk **Call** 0191 239 8003



FE Week Sudoku challenge

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

				6		4	5	
								8
7			9				3	
		8			7	2		1
	9			2			6	
4		7	3			9		
	4				3			2
8								
	5	3		7				

Difficulty:
EASY

8								
			6	9			7	4
		7					5	
3		4		5	9			
				6				
			7	2		8		1
	2					3		
5	9			4	3			
								5

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Solutions:
Next week

Last Week's solutions

1	7	6	4	3	5	9	8	2
4	2	5	8	7	9	6	3	1
9	8	3	6	2	1	5	7	4
6	9	7	2	4	8	3	1	5
8	1	4	7	5	3	2	9	6
3	5	2	1	9	6	7	4	8
7	6	9	5	8	4	1	2	3
5	3	8	9	1	2	4	6	7
2	4	1	3	6	7	8	5	9

Difficulty:
EASY

3	5	2	7	1	4	9	8	6
7	9	8	6	2	5	4	1	3
1	4	6	8	9	3	2	7	5
9	2	3	5	7	1	8	6	4
8	6	7	2	4	9	3	5	1
4	1	5	3	8	6	7	9	2
2	3	9	1	5	8	6	4	7
6	8	1	4	3	7	5	2	9
5	7	4	9	6	2	1	3	8

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Spot the difference
to WIN an FE Week mug







Spot **five** differences. First correct entry wins an *FE Week* mug. Text your name and picture of your completed spot the difference to 07969 166 374.

Last week's spot the difference winner was Nicola Styler (pictured right), 14-16 years and school liaison manager at South Gloucestershire and Stroud College.

